

Duke, Daphne

From: Brooks Smith
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 12:55 PM
To: PSC_Contact
Subject: [External] Piedmont Natural Gas pipeline- Docket No.2012-278-G

Joselyn Boyd

Public Service Commission of South Carolina

Chief Clerk and Administrator

101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100

Columbia, SC 29210

RE: Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc.

Notice of New Natural Gas Construction Project

Docket No. 2012-278-G

Ms. Boyd,

Please file these comments in Docket No. 2012-278-G.

I write to you in response to a proposed Natural Gas Pipeline Line 201 that will extend from Taylors to Travelers Rest. This is a high pressure transmission line that will require significant easements, permanent road access, and destruction of large swaths of trees. If built, it could cross the Enoree River in multiple locations which would threaten our watershed in the north Greenville area and further downstream. This pipeline was potentially set to cross my property along with more than 30 landowners along Beaverdam creek. Last week, the landowners received notice that our properties are no longer on the route. We are elated but are gravely concerned for the landowners on the next route that is targeted. I reach out to you to encourage a review of this pipeline and its necessity prior to its construction.

Upstate Forever has completed a thorough analysis of the project and has officially challenged its construction on grounds that it is oversized for the area, will irreparably harm the environment, and is costly to PNG customers and taxpayers. In addition, PNG/Duke already own and operate a gas line along Hwy 25 which can be used to enhance service if needed.

The process in which people's land can be seized through eminent domain is deeply flawed. Companies are allowed to begin construction of these projects without any approval process or oversight. I realize that this is state law as of now, but the only recourse for fighting these projects is through the Public Service Commission's review of prudence. I encourage the commission

to inquire with PNG prior to construction and easement negotiation. Currently, with no oversight at the state level, companies are incentivised to build projects given that costs can be recouped plus a guaranteed rate of return.

As a landowner, my experience and the experience of my neighbors was disheartening. PNG gave no information to us regarding the route, and have been reluctant to hold a public meeting (virtual) to speak to us as a group and allow us to answer questions. We wanted to be addressed as a group to ensure that we would receive consistent and truthful information. Often neighbors received misleading information from the land agents and we had no recourse whatsoever. In our case, we launched a public relations campaign with the help of our elected officials and local media. The normal procedure is for PNG to work with individual landowners which allows for negotiations to occur "in the dark" and away from public oversight. Currently, there is no requirement for companies to inform the public at large prior to these disruptive projects. I firmly believe communities deserve an opportunity to openly debate and analyze the projects that will directly impact their land.

In August of this year, Duke released a statement addressing how it plans to make up for profits lost with the Atlantic Coast Pipeline cancelation. In addition to positive and prudent measures such as increasing renewable energy sources, they cited expansion of natural gas pipelines through their subsidiary PNG as a source for revenue. This indicates that profit may indeed be the reason for pursuing the PNG Line 201. It is through state organizations like the PSC that Duke and PNG can be implored to serve the public interest rather than their shareholders.

I appreciate your time in reading my letter and your consideration of this issue. My hope is that changes can be made within the state legislature to preserve the rights of South Carolina citizens and protect our beautiful state.

Regards,

Brooks Smith

Travelers Rest, SC 29690